

AMENDMENTS

Amendments To Claims Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)

Applicants respectfully request amendment of Claims 1, 12-15, and 17-18, as provided below.

1. (Currently amended) A flexible reinforcement member for a communications cable comprising:

a plurality of high modulus fibers;

a primary saturant coupled to said plurality of high modulus fibers such that said primary saturant fills interstices between said high modulus fibers, serves as a matrix in which said plurality of high modulus fibers is dispersed and encased, and forms a strand of said primary saturant and said plurality of high modulus fibers, said primary saturant having a melting point below approximately 300 degrees Celsius and a melt viscosity of less than approximately 1000 centipoise; and

an outer layer of higher a high molecular weight, nonwater-based, water-swella
polymer topecoat coupled to said primary saturant such that said outer layer surrounds said strand.

2. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said primary saturant has a melting point between about 100 to about 150 degrees Celsius and a melt viscosity of less than 500 centipoise.

3. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said plurality of high modulus fibers comprises a plurality of sized high modulus fibers selected from the group consisting of a plurality of sized or unsized aramid fibers and a plurality of sized or unsized poly(p-phenylene-2,6-benzobisoxazole) (PBO) fibers and a plurality of sized or unsized carbon fibers and a plurality of sized or unsized high silica glass fibers and sized or unsized high tenacity, linearized polyethylene fiber.

4. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said plurality of high modulus fibers comprises a plurality of glass fiber strands.
5. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 4, wherein said plurality of glass fiber strands comprises at least one glass fiber bundle, each of said at least one glass fiber bundle comprising a plurality of glass fiber filaments.
6. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 2, wherein said plurality of glass fiber strands comprises a plurality of glass fiber filaments and at least one glass fiber bundle, each of said at least one glass fiber bundle comprising a plurality of glass fiber filaments.
7. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said primary saturant comprises a low molecular weight mineral wax.
8. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 7, wherein said low molecular weight mineral wax is selected from the group consisting of a low molecular weight microcrystalline wax, a low molecular weight polyalphaolefin wax, a low molecular weight polyethylene wax, or a modified (oxidized or maleated) polyolefin such as polyethylene or polypropylene, and blends thereof.
9. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said primary saturant comprises a blend of a low molecular weight microcrystalline wax and a styrene butadiene rubber, wherein said blend is between approximately 0.1 and 99.9 percent by weight of said low molecular weight microcrystalline wax and between approximately 0.1 and 99.9 percent by weight of said styrene butadiene rubber.

10. (Original) The flexible reinforcement of claim 9, wherein said blend comprises a 50/50 by weight blend of said low molecular weight microcrystalline wax and said styrene butadiene rubber.

11. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 4, wherein said plurality of glass fiber strands comprises a plurality of sized glass fiber strands selected from the group consisting of a plurality of sized or unsized E-type glass fiber strands and a plurality of sized or unsized ECR-type glass fibers.

12. (Currently amended) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said primary saturant comprises approximately 0.1 and 35 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member and wherein said outer layer of high molecular weight, nonwater-based, water-swellaable polymer ~~topeoat~~ comprises between approximately 0.1 and 35 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member.

13. (Currently amended) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 12, wherein said primary saturant comprises approximately 5 and 20 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member and wherein said outer layer of high molecular weight, nonwater-based, water-swellaable polymer ~~topeoat~~ comprises between approximately 5 and 20 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member.

14. (Currently amended) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 12, wherein said primary saturant comprises approximately 10 and 15 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member and wherein said outer layer of high molecular weight, nonwater-based, water-swellaable polymer ~~topeoat~~ comprises between approximately 10 and 15 percent of the total weight of said flexible reinforcement member.

15. (Currently amended) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said high molecular weight, nonwater-based, water-swellaable polymer ~~topeoat~~ is selected from the group consisting of ethylene vinyl acetate (EVA) polymers, block copolymers of polybutylene terephthalate, copolymers of long chain polyether glycols, thermoplastic elastomers, olefins, urethanes, polypropylene, polyethylene, polyurethane, low molecular weight mineral wax, polyacrylamides and blends thereof.

16. (Original) The flexible reinforcement of claim 15, wherein the glass transition temperature (Tg) of said flexible reinforcement is greater than about 400C.

17. (Currently amended) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 12, wherein said outer layer of high molecular, nonwater-based, weight water-swellaable polymer ~~topeoat~~ comprises an ethylene vinyl acetate polymer ~~topeoat~~.

18. (Currently amended) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 1, wherein said outer layer of high molecular weight, nonwater-based, water-swellaable ~~topeoat~~ is a blend of water-swellaable polymer ~~topeoat~~ and non water-swellaable ~~topeoat~~ polymer.

19. (Original) The flexible reinforcement member of claim 18, wherein the water absorbency for the reinforcement member is between about 111 to about 142 percent by weight.

20-30. Cancelled.